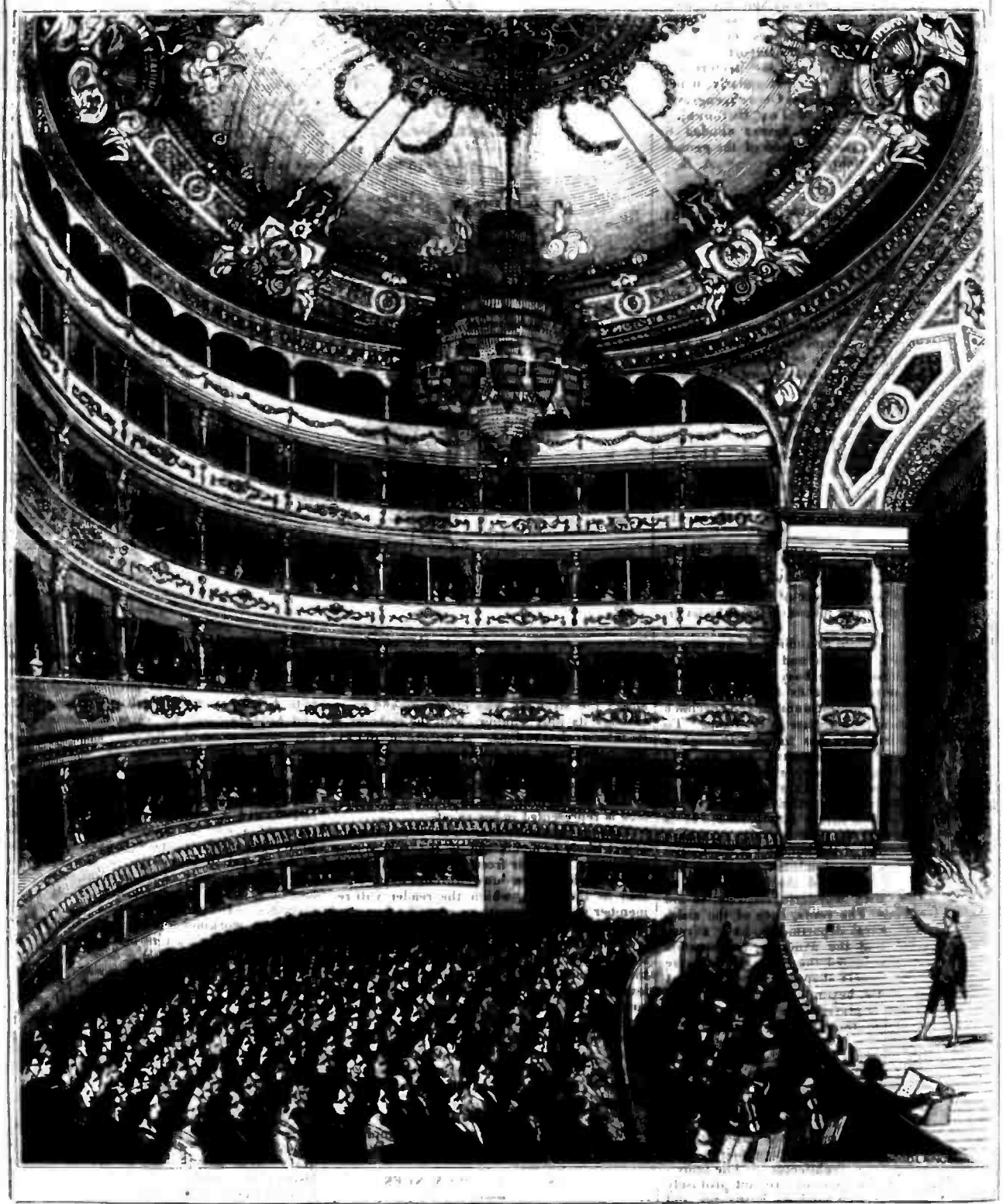
INTERIOR OF THE NEW OPERA HOUSE, COVENT GARDEN.*

MR. B. ALBANO, ARCHITECT.



OF REGULAR GEOMETRICAL FIGURES, AND THEIR USE IN ARCHITECTURE.

SIR,—Feeling much interest in the occasional disquisitions on beauty in architecture in your very useful journal, and wishing that the subject was more clearly defined, I beg to direct your attention to an article in your volume of 1846, page 620, entitled "Principles of Symmetrical Beauty," read before the Society of Arts, in which Mr. Hay maintains that the primary elements of all symmetrical beauty are centered *in the square, the equilateral triangle, and the pentagon.* Now, recollecting having read in the *Athenæum*, June 24, 1843, a review of one of Mr. Hay's works, setting forth that "there are, as in sound, so in form, only three simple primitive homogeneous parts,—*the circle, triangle, and square*,"—I am somewhat surprised at his now substituting the *pentagon* for the *circle*, without any reason being assigned. The equilateral triangle, square, and pentagon, have, however, been set forth as the three primary figures before, and this suggestion Mr. Hay has evidently availed himself of. In the "Natural system of Architecture as opposed to the artificial system of the present day," by Mr. W. P. Griffith, p. 29, we have the following remarks:—"In treating of forms, keeping symmetry and proportion in view, as in architecture, *all figures used must be regular, with equal sides and angles*; the Greeks on this account selected *the three simple or primary figures, viz., the trigon* (*triangle*), *the tetragon* (*square*), *and pentagon*, as their primary numbers or units. The term simple or primary is used to denote these figures as original, because they cannot be separated into others, or because they are not compounded of others; whilst compound or secondary figures are multiples of the former."

While upon this subject I may observe, that in the above-mentioned work, p. 36, a certain

* See page 165, in present number.

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